

CHECK • CONNECT • CARE

WHAT OUR CHILDREN ARE FEELING



LET'S
TALK



Why so much makeup, Nozi?



We all wear makeup. Girls who wear makeup are popular with boys, Lizo.

So that's why you never have time for me!



Can I try some? I also want to be pretty like you.

LOL

This is too precious to share! Go and play soccer with your friends.



4

I don't want to! Anyway, I don't HAVE any friends!



5

I can't even sleep without someone irritating me.

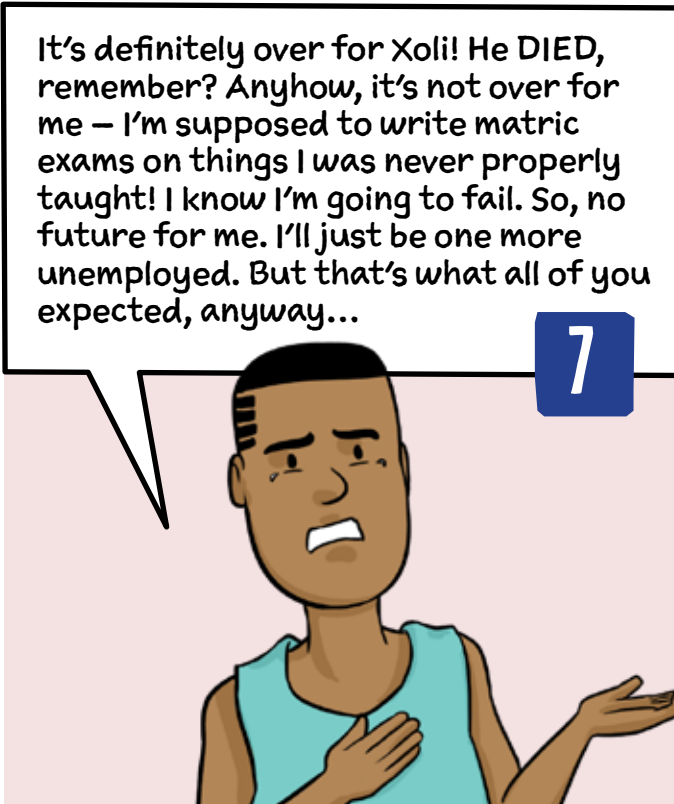
Sazi, you've been sleeping forever! Is it because of that cough mixture stuff you're always drinking.



6

Everyone uses Incika, especially since COVID. It's rough. It's not even that deep - it's not like I'm taking drugs.

Nyek!, Nyek! Nyek!, you're always going on about COVID! It's been OVER!



It's definitely over for Xoli! He DIED, remember? Anyhow, it's not over for me - I'm supposed to write matric exams on things I was never properly taught! I know I'm going to fail. So, no future for me. I'll just be one more unemployed. But that's what all of you expected, anyway...

7



8

Oh, what a day! So much work, so little pay! Nozi, haven't you started cooking? And where is Lizo? Has he done his homework? And you! Did you even get out of bed today? I can't do everything all by myself! I need all of you to help, too!

WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP

There are three things we can do to help our young people: **CHECK**, **CONNECT**, and **CARE**.

1

CHECK

Check for sudden changes in behaviour. This can be a sign that a young person might need help.

If a young person talks about wanting to be dead, or killing themselves, or doesn't believe anyone cares about whether they are alive or not, get help!

You can call any of the numbers in the box on the last page.

I might have trouble sleeping, or sleep too much.



I might often complain of feeling tired.



I might not want to spend time with my family or friends.



I might often complain of having a headache or a stomach ache, or other pains, even when there is no other sign I am sick.



I might seem very worried or anxious about even small things.



I might find it hard to make decisions, or keep forgetting things.

OUR YOUNG PEOPLE?

I might not enjoy the things I used to enjoy.



I might seem fine one minute, but angry or upset or sad the next minute – or I might just seem sad all the time.



I might not want to eat, or eat too much, or both.



I might not seem to care about anything, including how I look, or keeping myself clean.



My marks at school might get worse, or my teachers might complain that I don't concentrate or that I don't take my work seriously and make jokes all the time.

I might cry a lot, or say that I don't see any future, or that I am no good or a failure.

I might be drinking alcohol or 'lean', or taking other drugs.



2

CONNECT

Our youth often find it hard to talk about their feelings. But talking helps, especially to someone their own age. We can help them talk. We can do this even if we are not the parent.

We can help youth name their feelings. This makes it easier for them to talk about their feelings.



We can also show them that we are ready to listen when they want to talk about their feelings. We can also ask if there is someone else they want to talk to, and make chances for them to talk to that person.

You seem unhappy – is there anything you want to talk about?



I understand. It can be hard to talk. But I love you, and I am worried that you are not happy. If you ever want to talk to me, I am always ready to listen. Or is there someone else you would rather talk to? I could help with that if you want?

We can listen carefully when a young person talks to us. Don't tell them they are wrong to feel the way they do. Don't tell them what to do unless they ask for advice. We can also ask them what might make them feel better.

I don't want to go to school today.



No one wants to be my friend anymore.



3

CARE

Showing our youth that we care is the best thing we can do. We can do this by listening to them, and telling them or showing them we love them. But our young people's mental health can also be helped in other ways:

BY TALKING TO SOMEONE



BY GETTING EXERCISE



BY LISTENING TO MUSIC OR SINGING



BY SPENDING TIME WITH FRIENDS



BY EATING HEALTHY FOOD



BY BEING OUTSIDE IN NATURE



BY MAKING OUR SCHOOLS PLACES OF CARING



BY GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP



Remember, be caring, be kind, help others. Now go and have a good day!

This is a component of the Check • Connect • Care Youth Mental Health Programme, implemented by UNICEF in partnership with PID and Jive Media Africa.



GETTING HELP

These are organizations that can help children and young people who are struggling with their mental health. Anyone can call them any time of the day or night, any day of the week.

Childline – 116

This number is free on any cellphone network.

SADAG – 0800 456 789

This number is free on any cellphone network.

Lifeline – 0861 322 322

You will have to pay some of the cost of the call.

SUICIDE CRISIS NUMBER – 0800 567 567

Available 24 hours. All 11 official languages of South Africa are supported.

If you are struggling because of gender violence, you can call 0800 150 150 for free. If you are struggling because of HIV or AIDS, you can call 0800 012 322 for free.



Teen Talk

This is an app that any young person can download on their cellphone for free. They can then talk to another young person who has been trained to support others.



Scan this code to download the Teen Talk app.

